



Importance of Summer Reading

Public Library Summer Reading Programs and Learning

In a 2009 government web cast, Secretary of Education Arne Duncan described summer learning loss as “devastating.” This is what researchers have often referred to as the “summer slide.” It is estimated that school summer breaks will cause the average student to lose up to one month of instruction, with disadvantaged students being disproportionately affected (Cooper, 1996). Researchers conclude that two-thirds of the 9th grade reading achievement gap can be explained by unequal access to summer learning opportunities during the elementary school years, with nearly one-third of the gap present when children begin school (Alexander, Entwistle & Olsen, 2007). The body of existing research demonstrates the critical importance that the early development of summer reading habits can play in providing the foundation for later success. Summer learning research can be broadly categorized under the following themes:

- The impact of summer learning loss on disadvantaged youth
- Access to books and time devoted to reading
- The importance of successful reading experiences
- The impact of innovative summer reading programs

This synopsis of research on summer reading and learning provides a brief overview of these themes.

The Impact of Summer Learning Loss on Disadvantaged Youth

An in-depth study of Baltimore area students, Alexander et al. (2007), concluded that students from both better-off and disadvantaged backgrounds made similar achievement gains during the school year. However, during the summer the disadvantaged youth fell significantly behind in reading. This finding validates the importance of education but also indicates the disparities evident between students from different socioeconomic backgrounds. Dr. Beth Miller (2007)



posits, “Other factors, nearly all of them related to the opportunities and experiences children have outside of the school, in the community and their families, result in gaps in achievement scores.” Preeminent reading and education researchers, Anne E. Cunningham and Keith E. Stanovich (1998),

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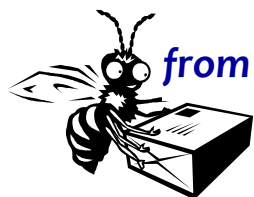
Points of Interest

Summer Reading Program Resources

are available for downloading from the Library of Virginia’s Virginia Public Library Extranet www.vpl.lib.va.us/youth-services/summer-reading-program/2010-summer-reading-program.html

Video Clips.
Radio announcement.
Music and lyrics.
Clip art.
PSA for website, YouTube, iTunes and TV.





from PubYac

Disruptive Children

I'm in a bit of a sticky situation. I have two Pre-School aged boys that have started coming to my Storyhour at the Library. During the school-year they attended a Storyhour I had every other week at their Daycare. The teachers were (mostly) able to keep them under control when they became loud and disruptive or if they stood right in front of me during the stories.

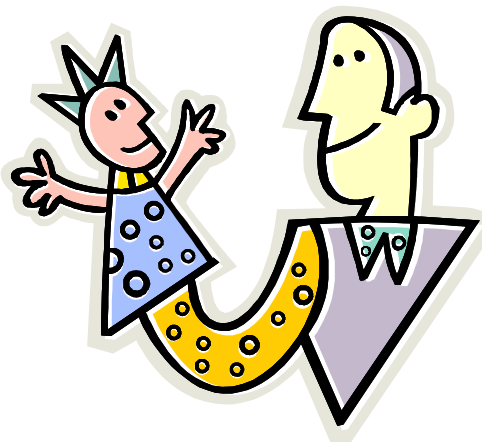
Now at the library storytime, they like to be IN the action and give hugs, lots, in the middle of the stories. But they also get in other kids' faces or talk really loudly or other behaviors they should be able to contain, or reminded to let other's listen. I know neither have an attention disorder. They just don't really always remember to keep it down and not disturb the other kids' listening. They are rarely outright mean and hurtful to others, just very chatty. I have repeatedly repeatedly, repeatedly asked them to sit down, let others listen, etc. I worked in daycare for awhile but that is a different situation than when parents are around, you know. AND their mother does not do anything to keep her boys under control. I understand they are young and it can be difficult to sit still and participate. They are even disruptive during the songs and action games, which I always throw in. They really like being the center of my attention and often forget the other kids are even there. I have hinted to their mother about their behavior, and I have heard other parents complain to one another about the boys. She is a very nice woman and I've seen her with her boys when storytime is not going on and she is able to keep them better behaved and under her wing.

I am wondering if she expects ME to be in control of her boys? During Storytime I'll look her way if they are being disruptive and she just smiles at them. ??? I would hate for them to stop coming, because they ARE great boys and always happy. And I would also feel awful if other families stopped attending b/c of what is going on. (and I don't like when people talk about others.) I'm sure you have run into similar situations such as this. How did you handle it professionally? I've heard mention of "rude behavior during storytime" policies. Do you have such policies? We are a small small town and typically get 6-12 regular kids per storytime, so losing one family would be a hard hit. Any suggestions and don't-dos would be greatly appreciated! THANKS!

(I didn't mean to get so lengthy. I guess I really needed to get it out...not complaining about the boys b/c they are great...just not their behavior)

Years ago I posted a list of story time rules on the door of the room. FYI - this included please go to the bathroom before you come in. I tried making a brief review of the rules a part of the introduction but it did not help. Then I had a puppet introduce our stories and review the story time rules. It made a huge difference! The kids actually listened to the puppet. It did not seem to matter it was obvious that I did the voice.

That said; it did not take care of all my problem children. For those children who were consistently disruptive, I spoke to the parent/caregiver after the program and explained why it was important that the children behaved according to the rules. I also said that I understand that children will not always be still. On those days the parent is free to take the children out (to a room off to the side or wherever), get them settled down and bring them back in. If that doesn't work, she may have to completely leave the program for that day. I then encourage the parent to keep trying and be firm.



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note the “Matthew effects,” in academic achievement; a reference to the Biblical passage of the rich-get-richer and the poor-get-poorer phenomenon. Differences in out-of-school access to books, positive reading practices, and connections with institutions supportive of self-discovery and reading, account for much of the disparity in student academic success. This has a cascading effect as children grow and develop.

Access to Books

According to McGill-Franzen and Allington (2004), “Too many children spend their summer with no books to read.” Their research cites the necessity of finding novel ways to get books into the hands of children during summer breaks. This idea is supported by research from Barbara Heyn (1978), who found that reading was the most influential factor related to summer learning. Further studies by Krashen (2004) simply state, “More access to books results in more reading.” These and other studies find that when schools close their doors, the opportunity to read is often closed with them, especially for those children without access to books. McQuillan (1998) found that, “There is now considerable evidence that the amount and quality of student’s access to reading materials is substantively related to the amount of reading they engage in, which in turn is the most important determinant of reading achievement.” The studies show that students’ who read more, read better; they also write better, spell better, have larger vocabularies, and have better control of complex grammatical constructions (Krashen, 2009).



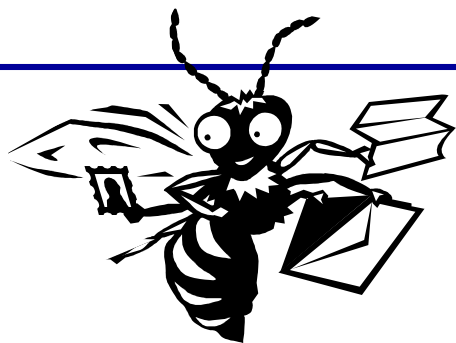
The Importance of Successful Reading Experiences

In their studies of children’s reading development, McGill-Franzen and Allington (2003), cite the importance of extensive, successful reading experiences in the development of reading proficiency. If children have the opportunity to listen to, discuss, and read books on topics that they select, they will develop extensive background information which can serve as a platform from which to engage in their own independent reading. Additional studies by Guthrie and Anderson (1999), found that “A history of less-successful reading experiences produces a lessened interest in voluntary reading than a history of successful reading experiences.” According to Cunningham and Stanovich (1998), the key predictors of positive reading development are success when learning to read and numerous opportunities and experiences with reading. Children who enjoy reading will read more and become proficient at the same time. A report from the National Institute of Education (1988) concluded that, “... the amount of reading done out of school is consistently related to gains in reading achievement.”

The Impact of Innovative Summer Reading Programs

Public library summer reading programs are one solution to the “summer slide.” In an analysis of summer learning programs by Miller (2007), it was found that children can benefit from “hybrid” programs which combine elements of youth development principles with academic enrichment. Summer reading programs in libraries exemplify this kind of hybrid program. Barbara Heyn (1978) found that “More than any other public institution, including the schools, the public library contributed to the intellectual growth of children during the summer.” Drs. Celano and Neumann (2001), in a study prepared for the Pennsylvania Library Association, monitored differences between children participating in public library summer reading programs and those involved in local recreational summer programs. They concluded that, in addition to literacy related activities, children in library programs benefited academically from story hours, arts and crafts, and other special events designed to enhance the reading experience.

Current research points out that increased summer reading reduces summer learning loss. Secretary of Education, Arne Duncan, has stated “A key step toward stopping the summer slide, is the development and launch of high quality programs that take advantage of time outside the school day and year to help children learn, grow, and develop” (Elling, 2009).



Notes from the Desk of the Children's and Youth Services Consultant

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Teen Program

We're doing an Artist Trading Card program with our teens this summer, and are looking for other libraries doing similar programs that we could trade cards with.

If you're interested in trading cards with us, please email me!

Rhonda Turley, Piedmont Public Library, Piedmont, OK
rhondaturl@aol.com

Retirement

Marsha Knox—Hampton Public Library

Moving on

Kelly Bevins—Virginia Beach Public Library

If you have pictures of your library displays, programs or first day event for the summer reading program, could you please send me a copy?

Also, I would like 92 copies of your summer reading program brochure. One will be kept on file at the Library of Virginia and the rest will be given to the other libraries at the September Directors Meeting.
Thanks!

Disruptive Children *(Continued from page 2)*

You may want to remind her that when the children enter school they will be expected to exhibit the same kind of behavior you are requiring in story time. Emphasize that you are there to encourage and support (not do for) her in her efforts to get her children school ready. Once that not so fun talk was done, I always then made sure to compliment the children in front of the parent when they had good days. I did have a couple of parents that did not come back after that chat, but I had more children show marked improvement in behavior. *Ultimately, remind yourself that it is better to lose the one or two disruptive children than potentially 10 or 12 due to the poor behavior of the 1 or 2 children.*

Rita Vernon - Jacksonville Public Library

Just a quick note about using puppets. When you are talking as the puppet, look at the puppet as much as you can. It is a subtle guide as to where the audience should be looking. It is so cute to see the little ones hanging on every word that the puppet says. Since I was teaching nutrition to preschoolers, I used a chef puppet most of the time. Other times I glued googlie eyes on celery and broccoli. The kids were still enthralled by what they had to say.

If you believe the puppet is real, so will the kids. 8-)

Mary Ann - Reading, Writing, and Recipes

<http://www.ReadingWritingandRecipes.com> - *the website is worth a look*

We're fortunate, you know. Too many people in this world spend their lives doing work that doesn't really matter in the great scheme of things. But bringing children and books together does matter. And we get to do it.

By Katherine Paterson "Back from IBBY" **Horn Book Magazine** January/February 1999
Katherine Paterson is the Current National Ambassador for Young People's Literature